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You and your child in hockey




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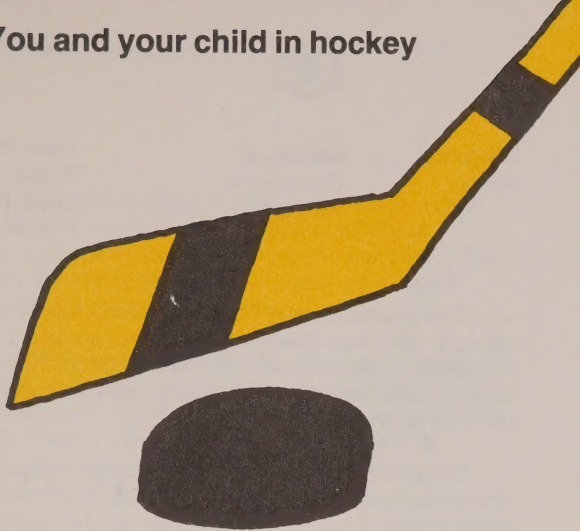


Ontario
Hockey
Council



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You and your child in hockey





Office of the
Minister

Ministry of
Culture and
Recreation

Parliament Buildings
77 Bloor St. W.
Toronto, Ontario
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The Ontario Hockey Council's mandate at its formation in January 1975 was to develop programs which would improve the hockey-playing climate for the children of this province. It has produced several worthwhile publications and films toward this end.

I believe it is accomplishing its purpose and perhaps proof of this statement is that this letter will be included in the third printing of this booklet, *You and your child in hockey*.

Please use the Council's material and accept my good wishes that hockey will be a safe, healthy and more rewarding activity for members of your family.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Reuben C. Baetz".

Reuben C. Baetz,
Minister of Culture
and Recreation

Letter from the Chairman of the Ontario Hockey Council

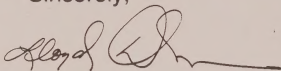
Dear Parent:

The Ontario Hockey Council, now commencing its fifth year of operation, is charged with the responsibility of improving the climate of amateur hockey in the province. We are attempting to do this through a variety of educational vehicles, of which this handbook is one.

We hope "You and your child in hockey", a project of our Parent Education Committee, will help you understand your privileges, rights and responsibilities as a parent of a hockey-playing child. Other material we have produced can be secured by contacting the OHC at 50 Michener Road, Apt. 610, Chatham, Ontario, N7L 4T2.

I would like to thank the members of the Ontario Hockey Council and Sub-Committee Chairmen for their contribution to hockey since the Council's inception.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Lloyd Davidson', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Lloyd Davidson,
Chairman,
Ontario Hockey Council.

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The Ontario Hockey Council: purpose

As a result of the Report on Violence in Amateur Hockey* by William R. (Bill) McMurtry Q.C. this council was established in January, 1975 to create a climate which ensures that children have the opportunity to participate in and enjoy the game of hockey at their level of competence. The Council consists of voting delegates from each of the following organizations: Ontario Hockey Association; Ontario Minor Hockey Association; Metropolitan Toronto Hockey League; Northern Ontario Hockey Association; Thunder Bay Hockey Association; Ottawa District Hockey Association; Ottawa District Minor Hockey Association; Ministry of Culture and Recreation. In addition there are three non-voting members who serve as presiding officers of the following sub-committees: Parent Education; Player and Official Education; Public and Media Education.



The major functions of this Council are:

1. to identify those areas of hockey which demand intensive study and request the appropriate sub-committee to study and report on the area;
2. to establish the priorities and study the results and recommendations of Sub-Committee reports; and,
3. where practical, to advise the application of Sub-Committee recommendations to the various organizations comprising the Council.

Any questions concerning the work of this Council or this Handbook should be directed to:

Ontario Hockey Council
c/o Lloyd Davidson
50 Michener Rd., Apt. 610
Chatham, Ontario N7L 4T2

The role of parents in minor hockey

1. Kids imitate adults!

The blood started to gush from a deep cut across the referee's hand while the other official staggered from a blow on the forehead. This happened while the two were trying to break up a fight this winter . . . While the referee reprimanded the hockey playing youngster, the mother shouted the famous four-letter expletive for everyone in the arena to hear. Immediately the child took up the challenge and used the same expletive direct toward the official.

Parents versus referees, referees versus youngsters, coaches and executives versus the league hierarchy — the vicious circle continues.

Fortunately, such extreme cases are rare. But milder and similar performances by mom and dad in the stands do occur in minor hockey. It's no secret that parents serve as "role models" for their children — especially the younger ones. Kids observe their parents' actions and often imitate them. In addition, they absorb the attitudes that they think lie behind their parents' actions. Be a positive model for your youngster. Minor hockey is supposed to be a game for fun and happiness!

2. It's their game!

It sometimes seems that kids' hockey is overrun by adults. They organize it, administer it, coach it, establish and enforce the rules, and do just about everything else. All the kids have to do is play the game, according to adult ideas of how it ought to be played. Has anyone ever asked the youngsters their

opinion on how hockey ought to be run? After all, it's their game! It is interesting to watch kids playing their "own" games of shinny, away from adults. They manage quite well to establish rules (probably fewer of them though), and there can be changes if the majority wants them changed. They usually know when they've had enough and quit for the day, or the season. They find ways for the majority to get the most possible fun out of it. Maybe we ought to have more input from the players in minor hockey?

Remember, the game is for those who *play* it, and everybody else should be as inconspicuous as possible. Let's help our youngsters establish and achieve their hockey goals, and be careful not to impose our own goals on them. It may be too much of a burden to bear.



3. Does your kid really appreciate or need your yelling?

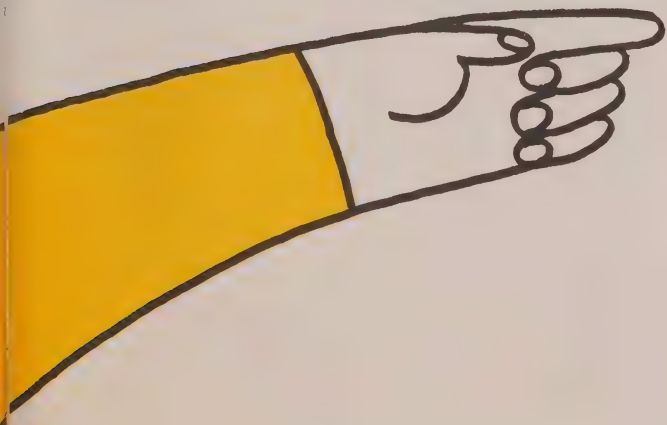
In one minor hockey association last year, the father of the best player in the Atom House League had the habit of constantly yelling advice to his child during the game: "Pass it", "Check", "Shoot", "Get back", and so on. But the child, unlike most other kids in the division, oddly didn't seem to be improving in ability (although remaining better than the rest). The perceptive observer could see that about one third of the way through the season, the kid had started to become very conscious of the father's booming voice. This went on for three quarters of the season, with nobody saying a word, until the league convenor walked up to the father and bluntly suggested that he "shut up". Embarrassed, the father was almost silent for the rest of the season. He had probably not been fully aware of the extent of his yelling, and of course had not even considered that his instructions were a distraction to his child. Almost immediately the child's game began to improve and continued to do so until the end. In addition, a big weight seemed to have been lifted from the kid's shoulders.



4. "It's a game not a war"

The poster is pinned up in the arena lobby, just outside the door as you come in. You can read the words, Howie Meeker's words — at 20 paces: "Let's put the fun back in hockey. It's a game not a war". Two big men, with small children beside them, came through that door and paused for a second. "Jeez what next?" one snorted. "Now somebody wants to turn hockey into a ballet".

Often when reading the sports pages we read about the latest tough guy. But is this a suitable attitude to encourage in your youngsters? Maybe it is for the less than one per cent who may be headed for the pro's. It may pay off for them. But what of the other 99 per cent? Most would probably choose to play without the pressure of having to prove they are tough. But what have parents to do with this? Well, kids learn violence by observing others being violent and by perceiving that significant people in their lives (their parents, coaches and team-mates) approve of violence. You can help your child and the game of hockey by making it clear that you disapprove of illegal hockey violence, especially fighting and the illegal use of the stick.



5. Hockey is for happiness

Here is a “code of conduct” taken from another minor sport.

- _____ is a game for happiness.
- The laws of _____ should be regarded as mutual agreements the spirit or letter of which no one should try to evade or break.
- Visiting teams and spectators are honored guests.
- No advantages except those of superior skill should be sought.
- Officials and opponents should be treated as honest in intention.
- Official decisions should be accepted without becoming angry, no matter how unfair they may seem.
- Winning is desirable. But winning at any cost defeats the purpose of the game.
- Losing can be a triumph when you've given your best.
- The ideal is the greatest good to the greatest number.
- In _____ as in life, treat others as you would have them treat you.

Of course, it is one thing to read something and another to believe and do it. But for starters, what if all parents *behaved* according to this set of standards. Maybe hockey can become “a game for happiness!”



Some bits of wisdom to think about

The following poem was written by a concerned parent and appeared in *Coaches Corner** (Vol. 2, No. 8) which is published monthly by the Hockey Technical Director's Office of the Ontario Hockey Association.

YEKCOH

*Yekcoh pronounced "yekko" is a funny new game,
It's hockey spelled backwards, I will try to explain.
It's a game just for parents of young hockey kids,
You'll hear them at rinkside flipping their lids.
They scream and they shout, they rant and they roar
No wonder their poor child's too nervous to score.
It's a game for the memory and it's not really tough,
Any parent can do it if you practise enough.
The rules are quite simple, the results are much better,
If you will try to remember each rule by its letter.*

- Y — is for yelling, which you must not do with the exception of cheering, which we're coming to.
- E — are emotions that embarrass the child and which only get team-mates riled.
- K — is for kids who are trying to play. The program is theirs, to learn their own way.
- C — is for cheering and in this way you show you have confidence in your youngsters, and just watch them go.
- O — is for orders, which you never shout. Remember to leave these for the coach to dish out.
- H — is for home, which is where you should stay if you hinder the kids when they come out to play.

*So that is the game and there's one basic theme,
Remember the motto when tempted to scream.
Though we're not really trying to put you back on the shelf,
"Parents need not wear glasses to make spectacle of self."*



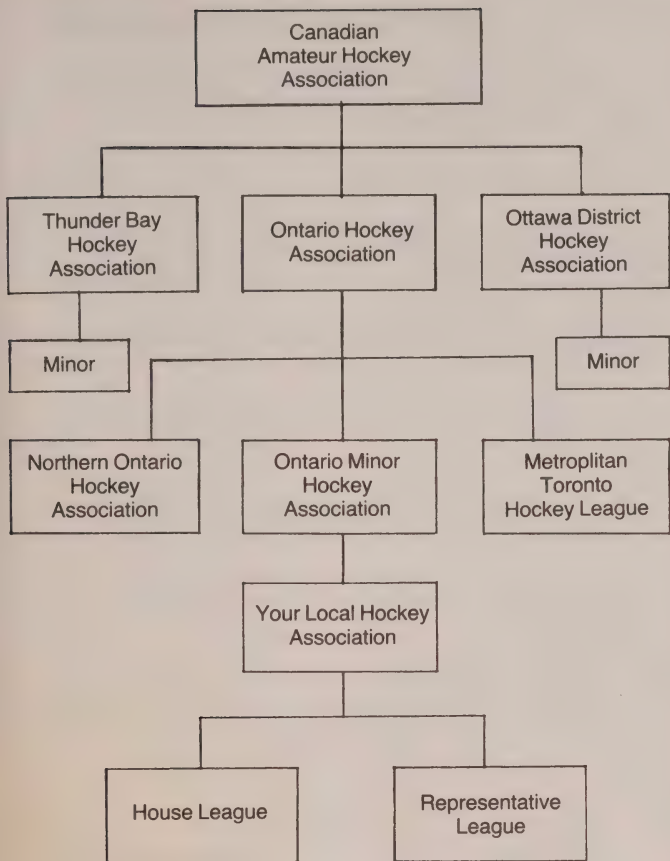
*This publication is available to all interested parents for \$2.00 per year from:
Hockey Technical Director, OHA, 559 Jarvis Street, Toronto, Ontario M4Y 2T1.

The aims, objectives and structure of minor hockey in Ontario

The following Aims and Objectives are currently being discussed by the Ontario Hockey Council. They are presented here to make you aware that people involved in hockey are just as interested in the *total* growth and development of your child as you are. Coaches, officials, and league executives wish to provide an environment whereby players can develop to their fullest potential both as players and as human beings. As a result a sound hockey program aims to develop not only hockey skills, physical fitness and knowledge of hockey tactics, but also a positive self-concept and an awareness of an individual's rights, privileges and responsibilities, both on and off the ice.

In order to provide instruction, leadership and competition for the many boys and girls who are playing amateur hockey in Ontario, the diagrams on the following page outline the organizational structures as they exist at the present time.





Residence requirements for minor hockey

The Residence Rule is a major technique to ensure that every minor age child has a fair and reasonable opportunity to participate in a hockey program.

The CAHA residence rule states:

“no player shall be registered as a member of, or compete for, a team in any association match who has not been a *bona fide* resident of that community.”

This rule prevents a number of abuses that have occurred and can occur such as:

1. the disruption of the child's home, social and school life to develop a winning team.
2. the “bidding war” for minor age players by the wealthier clubs which emphasizes a “win at all costs” philosophy.
3. raiding another team or town for “imports” which creates uneven competition and which may force youngsters off the team.
4. having a child placed in a legal guardian's home in another part of the community, or in another community, in order to be eligible to play for a team in that area.

On the positive side the rule:

1. fosters community interest in a "home grown" team.
2. creates a sense of loyalty and responsibility by the players to the community, the hockey association and their team-mates.
3. ensures that children in smaller communities are not deprived of their right to play hockey because key team-mates are recruited by other teams.
4. ensures even and fair competition between communities of equal size.

In summary, the intent of the residence rule is to ensure that every one is treated fairly.



Other information

Hockey Association constitutions and/or by-laws

Most local associations have a constitution or set of by-laws which regulate their activities. If you do not have a copy, ask to see one so that you are thoroughly familiar with the rights and responsibilities of yourself and your child.



Communication between coaches and parents

Often coaches hold a meeting with the parents at the start of each season to explain their philosophy and team strategy and to request parental co-operation and communication concerning their child. Please encourage your child's coach to call a meeting and make every effort to attend. Finally, be patient and understanding with the coach. Coaches are volunteers who spend many hours to do their best for our youngsters and the teams they play on.

National Coaching Certification Program

The Ontario Hockey Association initiated Coaching Clinics in 1970. This program has since been adopted and expanded by the C.A.H.A. who are providing coaching clinics leading to certification at five (5) levels.

The first four (4) levels are offered by the Hockey Technical Directors office in each province, while Level V is an annual national coaching clinic to which successful candidates at Level IV in each province are invited. The purpose of this certification program is to enable all coaches to develop: technical knowledge about the game, effective teaching methods, a sound philosophy concerning the role of hockey in a young player's life, and techniques to enable them to more effectively communicate with players, parents and executives.

This program includes the following levels:

Level I A 3 hour introduction to hockey.

Level II An 8 hour (1 day) clinic which includes classroom sessions on: The Role of the Coach, Conditioning, Injuries and Equipment, Team Play, Teaching Methods, Game Strategy, Mechanics of Skating, and Goaltending. In addition, on-ice sessions stress teaching methods for skating, puck control, shooting and checking.

- Level III** A 15-20 hour program of hockey technical information for those who have completed both Level II of the Hockey Coaching Certification Program and, Level I — Theory* of the Ontario Coaching Development Program. A coach is required to complete an assignment before certification at this level is granted.
- Level IV** A one week clinic for those who have been recommended by their Level III instructor. In order to be certified at this level each coach must pass a written examination and complete a 30-40 page assignment.
- Level V** A one week lecture — seminar course for those who have completed Level IV and who are Provincial Instructors at Levels I, II and III.

Although this program is not mandatory at the present time, many associations require that their coaches attain at least Level II certification. In fact, some associations do not assign coaches to a team until after a Level II Clinic has been held in their area. It is hoped that within the next few years Level II certification will be mandatory for at least all coaches at the competitive level. This would ensure that your child is being coached by an individual who has at least a minimal amount of knowledge about strategy, tactics, injury prevention and treatment. In addition, he or she has been exposed to a sound philosophy of coaching and thoroughly understands the rights, privileges and responsibilities of a coach and therefore can do the best job possible with your child.

Is your child's coach certified? Their school teacher and swimming instructor are!

*Level 1 Theory is offered in the evenings at community colleges and universities. This is a 15 hour course which introduces coaches in all sports to the psychological, sociological, physiological and biomechanical principles of coaching.

National Referee Certification Program

Just as attempts are being made to educate and certify coaches, a training and certification program for referees is being initiated. Again this program is administered by the Ontario Hockey Technical Directors Office.

The National Referees Certification Program is structured into six levels. Below is a summary of the requirements an individual must meet in order to be certified at any level.

Level 1 — new referee, house league

Level 2 — referee — competitive minor hockey

Level 3 — referee — minor hockey playoffs
linesman in Junior B,C,D, Int.
A,B,C,D, community college

Level 4 — linesman — Jr. "A"
Sr. "A"
University
International Competition
Inter-Branch Playoffs

— referee — Jr. B,C,D
International B,C,D
Community College
Minor Hockey Regional &
Provincial Playoffs and
International Competition

Level 5 — referee — Jr. "A", Sr. "A", International
A, University

Level 6 — referee — National Championships
International Competition

Equipment: guidelines for purchase and fitting

All equipment must fit properly or it will not provide sufficient protection. Avoid the tendency to buy equipment that your child can “grow” into and therefore make it last for two or three years. This is especially important for skates and helmets. For example, if the skates are too large, the player will not be able to skate well. Many beginners lose interest in the game when they complain of “weak” ankles. The real reason is often because the skates do not fit properly. As a basic rule for fitting skates make sure that the toes can move freely, that the heel fits firmly, and that the toe cap and tendon guard provide strong protection.

Make sure you purchase a C.S.A. approved helmet and that it fits snugly when done up. Furthermore, in order to provide the best protection, you should purchase a face protector which attaches to the helmet. Finally, it is recommended that all players 12 and under wear an external mouthpiece for dental protection while those over 13 years of age should be personally fitted with an internal mouthguard.



The role of the league

If kids made the world, chances are there wouldn't be any hockey leagues. Chances are there would be sticks and skates and pucks and sweaters — most of all, there'd be sweaters, sweaters in maroons and purples and screaming yellows and the wildest pea-soup greens — but no leagues. Kids like spontaneity in their games. They throw themselves into road hockey and sandlot ball and touch football on the field out behind the new apartment building down the block. Kids take their games loose and free, and chances are, when it comes to hockey, they'd leave out the leagues if they were making the rules.

Still, the fact is that leagues are good for kids in ways that they may not at first recognize. For one thing, leagues allow more youngsters to enjoy more ice time than they might ordinarily find in these rushed and crowded times. Leagues make sure all players get their fair share of action on the rink. Leagues also give the game that the youngsters play a point of focus. Leagues let kids judge themselves against their peers, to see how they measure up and to learn to dig inside themselves for their very best efforts. A little competition, after all, is a valuable commodity as long as it's properly guided.

Leagues play an essential role, then, in every child's hockey life, but the leagues won't work — and the players won't get the intended benefits out of them — unless one other group finds their proper role in the hockey scheme of things. That other group is you — the parents. In some ways, the mothers and fathers of young hockey players have the toughest job of all. They must walk a very thin and nervous line of diplomacy and intelligence. Parents must be encouraging without being pushy, must be available for help without taking over, must offer praise but mustn't load children with responsibilities they can't carry. Parents need patience, energy and immense amounts of good cheer. Parents, in short, must sometimes carry a heavy burden. But parents also come in for the greatest of all rewards — the chance to watch their children grow and improve and mature as they play an exhilarating sport.

Sadly, some parents let their passions run away with them at the hockey arena, and the results often bring pain — especially to their own children. An anonymous letter that appeared in various publications during the past couple of years expressed just exactly how distressing that pain can be:



“Dear Mom and Dad:

I hope that you won't get mad at me for writing this letter, but you always told me never to keep anything back that ought to be brought out into the open. So here goes.

Remember the other morning when my team was playing and both of you were sitting and watching. Well, I hope that you won't get mad at me, but *you* kind of *embarrassed me*. Remember when I went after the puck in front of the net trying to score and fell? I could hear you *yelling* at the goalie for getting in my way and tripping me. It wasn't the goalie's fault; that is what a goalie is supposed to do. Then do you remember *yelling* at me to get on the other side of the blue line. The coach told me to cover my check and I couldn't if I listened to you, and while I tried to decide they scored against us. Then you *yelled at me* for being in the wrong place. You shouldn't have jumped all over the coach for pulling me off the ice. The coach is a pretty good one, a good person too, and knows how to do the job. Besides, the coach *is just a volunteer* coming down at all hours of the day helping us kids, just because of a love for sports. And, then neither of you spoke to me the whole way home, I guess you were pretty sore at me for not getting a goal. *I tried awfully hard*, but I guess I am a crummy hockey player. But, *I love the game*, it is lots of fun being with the other kids and learning to compete. It is a good sport, but how can I learn if you don't show me a good example. And, anyhow I thought I was *playing hockey for fun*, to have a good time, and to learn good sportsmanship. I didn't know that you were going to get so upset because I couldn't become a star.

Love,

There are all sorts of ways for parents to avoid getting this kind of letter. But it takes a certain amount of sound good sense to steer clear of the pitfalls, and maybe the hints and suggestions in this booklet will help you the parents to see the best way to support your hockey-playing children.



Attorney General

Lloyd Davidson, Esq.,
Chairman,
Ontario Hockey Council

It was a pleasure to meet with you and discuss the fine work being done by the Ontario Hockey Council. As you indicated, there is perhaps some misunderstanding about the involvement of the Attorney General's Department in the sport of hockey. First, let me reassure you that I believe most strongly that the control and discipline of amateur hockey players should, wherever possible, be left to the coaches and officials of the relevant hockey associations.

It has come to our attention, however, that there have been isolated cases of apparent criminal conduct by certain players during hockey matches. Legal precedent going back for over a century has made it clear that there is no legal immunity for a criminal act committed by a person simply because he or she is involved in an athletic contest. As senior law enforcement officer of the Province, I have a sworn duty to uphold the law and this I intend to do.

I am gratified by the sincere and dedicated effort presently being made by the various amateur hockey authorities, particularly in this Province, to deal with the problem of increased violence. Unfortunately, there has not been the same responsible attitude displayed by some of the officials in the professional leagues which makes your task that much more difficult. We hope that by applying the law of the land in the more flagrant cases, we will be able to convince these authorities to take more positive action on their own part.

Again, sincere best wishes to you and your colleagues on the Ontario Hockey Council.

Yours sincerely,

Roy McMurtry

Ontario Hockey Council

Chairman

Lloyd Davidson

50 Michener Rd., Apt. 610, Chatham, N7L 4T2

Tel: 519-352-7143

Members

Metropolitan Toronto Hockey League

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Northern Ontario Hockey Association

100 Chippewa St., North Bay, P1B 6G2

Ontario Hockey Association

24 Merton St., Toronto, M4S 1A1

Ottawa and District Hockey Association

P.O. Box 1115, Cornwall, K6H 5V2

Ottawa and District Minor Hockey Association

P.O. Box 1115, Cornwall, K6H 5V2

Thunder Bay Amateur Hockey Association

258 Windsor St., Thunder Bay, P7B 1V6

Ontario Minor Hockey Association

56 Applefield Drive, Scarborough, M1P 3X9

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